

**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY  
REGION II**

Date:

Subject: Summary of On-site Reconnaissance for Selecto Flash, Inc., West Orange, New Jersey

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To: File

The Selecto Flash Inc. (SFI) site is a former large-scale silk screening facility. The site has recently filed for bankruptcy and is in the care of a court appointed trustee. The site is located at 18 Central Avenue, West Orange, Essex County, New Jersey in a mixed industrial/commercial/residential area. SFI is 1.25 acres in size and is bound by Central Avenue to the northeast, the former Biddelman Inc. (Biddelman) to the northwest, Mitchell Street and residential properties to the southwest, and an industrial property to the southeast (former Harvard Press). SFI consists of a main, three-story building, a one-story storage building, an asphalt parking area adjacent to Central Avenue, and two trailers and a woodshop area on a dirt and gravel parking area adjacent to Mitchell Street. The first floor of the main building housed the silk screening portion of the operations, the second floor was used for digital printing, and the third floor was used as office space.

SFI used solvent-based inks during the 1980s and then changed to ultraviolet (UV) based inks in the 1990s. Raw materials consisted of small quantities of solvent-based thinners, developers, retarders, and cleaners were stored in the one-story building. Spent cleaners, inks, and solvent wash waters were collected in metal troughs, transferred to 55-gallon drums and disposed as hazardous waste. The SFI property is adjacent to the former Biddelman, Inc. (Biddelman) facility, which previously operated as a wholesale distributor of dry-cleaning supplies. Groundwater and subsurface soils samples previously collected from the SFI and Biddelman sites indicated elevated concentrations of trichloroethylene (TCE), tetrachloroethylene (PCE), and vinyl chloride.

A site investigation was conducted at the SFI site in April 2008. Surface and subsurface soil samples were collected along with groundwater from monitoring wells installed on the property and from off-site monitoring wells. This investigation led to the site being proposed to the National Priority List (NPL) as a portion of the Orange Valley Regional Groundwater Contamination site (CERCLIS ID NJD002148799).

In April 2010, the Removal Action Branch (RAB) began a vapor intrusion investigation of residential properties surrounding the SFI site. Fourteen subsurface soil gas samples and five outdoor ambient air samples were collected within right-of-ways surrounding the site. Results indicated elevated concentrations of TCE and PCE. RAB conducted sub-slab soil gas sampling within three residential properties surrounding the SFI site. The results indicated that the concentrations of volatile organic compounds (VOCs) did not pose a threat of exposure in the indoor air above the applicable EPA action guidance levels in the residences sampled.

In March 2012, EPA received an email from a concerned citizen stating that SFI had closed and that the building was unsecured. The email also stated that there were strong solvent-like odors coming from the one-story building.

The Office of Regional Council (ORC) contacted the bankruptcy trustee to gain access to the site. The Trustee gave ORC the name of a former owner of the site who still had the keys to the site. The Removal Action Branch (RAB) arranged a date for an on-site reconnaissance of the site on June 1, 2012.

RAB and its contractor conducted a reconnaissance of the site. The doors to the building were locked along with the main gate to the parking lot. The contact opened the door to the building and turned on the lights. He stated that the bank that took ownership of the site insisted that power and heating remain operable at the site.

RAB observed the screen wash area, which contained approximately eight 55-gallon drums that were labeled as "Blend Selecto Screen Wash #800". A bung hole on one drum was open and a Multi-RAE PID reading of 1,500 ppm was recorded. The wash area also contained several open buckets with unknown material inside. Two large washbasins were present, approximately 10 x 15 feet in size. The unit on the left was used for UV based inks that were described as water-soluble. Wash waters were discharged to the sanitary sewer. The unit on the right was used for solvent-based inks. Workers utilized a recirculation pump to clean screens with solvents (presumed to be the Blend Selecto Screen Wash #800). The pump was removed and currently a bucket with black liquid was under the drain. A PID reading of 212 ppm was recorded coming from the bucket. RAB observed a floor drain in this area with an unknown discharge point.

RAB observed the assembly area, loading dock, office space, and main work areas. The main work area had one pallet with approximately 30 containers of Ultra Violet (UV) and solvent-based inks. RAB observed the boiler room, which had two buckets, one open of an unknown black liquid, presumed to be oil of some sort. RAB observed a storage area with various motor oil containers and the like. The large assembly area contained several 5-gallon drums of unknown liquid, two large and two small containers of what the site contact called Nitrogen gas, but was labeled as Premier Adhesive, and one large container of Liquid CO<sub>2</sub>. The Screen

Making Lab contained several open buckets of dried up material and several shelf units containing approximately 100 containers of UV based inks.

RAB entered the Color Mixing Lab and observed several hundred containers of UV and solvent-based inks on several rows of shelving units. A specific mixing area with an open fume hood and one unknown 55-gallon drum were documented. A one-gallon container of Methyl Ethyl Ketone and a red gasoline can were also observed. There was a strong odor in the room however; there were no readings above background on the PID.

The second floor formerly contained the solvent-based ink printing area and other storage areas. In the printing area, RAB observed approximately eight drums of Blend Selecto Screen Wash #800 or used waste inks and approximately 100 new ten-liter containers of solvent-based inks. Floor has many ink stains throughout area. Move to office areas and work layout areas. Locate a pad-locked door with top part open. Door leads to a storage closed believed to contain only bathroom cleaners. Several small offices for maintenance staff were observed, that contained various equipment including one small propane tank. The large work area contained an open flammable material cabinet with a 5-gallon can of denatured alcohol solvent and several ten-liter bottles of solvent-based inks.

The third floor of the building contained all office space. The office space contained many computer parts and paper files. RAB observed no signs of storage containers.

The site contact stated that the bank, which took over the site or the company in Minnesota that took over the contents of the building, sold all of the machinery to a metal scrap dealer. The dealer hired some local people to assist with the removal of the materials. After work was complete, someone broke into the building and removed some piping. During this action, the fire suppression system was damaged and needed repair.

The site contact stated that he could not open the one-story storage building. RAB personnel decided to try the door and it opened. Inside the storage building were approximately 15 55-gallon drums, 50 5-gallon buckets, and hundreds of small containers with unknown contents. The site contact stated that he referred to the building as the explosion-proof building and was built in the early 1900s.

RAB observed the rear portion of the building from the Mitchell St. entrance. The site contact stated that a landscaper parks his vehicles there and maintains the grass at the property. The landscaper does not have access to the main or storage buildings.

Summary: Approximately 30 55-gallon drums of either Blend Selecto Screen Wash #800 or waste UV or solvent-based inks, hundreds of containers of UV or solvent-based inks, and various

printing supplies were observed in the site buildings. The main-3-story building doors are locked as well as the gate from Central Ave. leading into the parking lot. The small storage building is not presently locked. Trespassing has occurred in the past.